Ilario Pantano first enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 17 and was inspired to reenlist following the terrorist attack of September 11 of 2001, 10 years after his service as an elite marine sniper and a veteran of Desert Storm.

Answering the patriotic call to duty, Lieutenant Pantano voluntarily left a successful career in finance to head to officer's training school in Quantico, Virginia. As a platoon commander in Iraq, Lieutenant Pantano was praised by his fellow marines and superiors as a capable and devoted leader and an intelligent and motivated officer who embodied the Marine Corps principles of honor, courage, and commitment.

As someone who had the pleasure of meeting Lieutenant Pantano, along with his lovely wife, Jill, and his two sons, I believe every American would benefit from reading the inspiring story of such a great American and a military hero.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that those who read Lieutenant Pantano's story will come to a better understanding of the depth of his strength and heroism, both on the battlefield and in the courtroom.

Mr. Speaker, I close by asking God to please bless the men and women in uniform and to ask God to continue to bless America.

RAISING AWARENESS OF AUTISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a disease that has a profound impact on those it afflicts. Autism is a bioneurological developmental disability that generally appears before the age of 3.

Autism impacts the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction, communication skills, and cognitive function. Individuals with autism typically have difficulties communicating and interacting with others and often engage in repetitive behaviors. Individuals with autism often suffer from numerous physical ailments, which may include allergies, asthma, epilepsy, digestive disorders, persistent viral infections, feeding disorders, sensory integration dysfunction, sleeping disorders and more.

Some may be surprised, Mr. Speaker, to learn that autism is diagnosed four times more often in boys than girls. Its prevalence is not affected by race, region or socioeconomic status. According to the National Autism Association, autism and related developmental disorders affect one in 166 people across the country, 10 times as many as just a decade ago.

No one knows for certain what causes autism. Some believe that anything from genetics to certain vaccines can lead to autism. Those with infants and toddlers should watch for the early signs of autism, which include no big smiles by 6 months, no sharing of sounds, smiles or facial expressions by 9 months, and no babbling by 12 months, no words by 18 months, and any loss of speech or social skills at any age.

I wish to repeat that, Mr. Speaker: those with infants and toddlers should watch for the early warning signs of autism, which include no big smiles by 6 months, no sharing of sounds, smiles or facial expressions by 9 months, no babbling by 12 months, no words by 18 months, and any loss of speech or social skills at any age.

Autism, however, does not affect life expectancy. Currently there is no cure for autism, though with early intervention and treatment, the diverse symptoms related to autism can be greatly improved. This makes it imperative that appropriate resources are available to help people with autism and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to take to this floor over the coming weeks and months to highlight the impact autism has on those it afflicts and those who care for them. I hope by doing so that I can help raise awareness about this disease and encourage greater understanding about the importance of research into its prevention, detection and treatment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5672, SCIENCE, STATE, JUSTICE, COMMERCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–529) on the resolution (H. Res. 890) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5672) making appropriations for Science, the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4973, FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2006

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–530) on the resolution (H. Res. 891) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4973) to restore the financial solvency of the national flood insurance program, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise at this time to say a few words about the U.S. economy, which has been actually quite good. It is quite amazing for us here in the House with all of the responsibilities that we have and with all of the responsibilities outside of the beltway that the American people have to just take a minute or a few minutes, I guess, to review the current economic situation.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, some of the observations are quite apparent to me, and I just wanted to share these observations with my colleagues and with others who may be present.

According, Mr. Speaker, to most neutral observers, including the Federal Reserve and a consensus of private economists, the economy is doing quite well and is quite healthy. Indeed, if anything, there seems to be a little concern in some quarters that the economy may have been growing too fast, a concern with which I do not agree.

The economy actually grew 4 percent in 2004 and advanced at a rate of about 3.5 percent in 2005. The growth rate for the first quarter of 2006 is expected to be very robust, consistent with the trend of strong growth since 2003.

In the first quarter of 2006, the economy expanded at a blistering rate of 5.3 percent. Now, these are all figures and statistics that we can vividly see because, in effect, we have already been through them. Looking ahead is a somewhat more difficult exercise, and an exercise that I often refer to others with whom I communicate from time to time.

I have here in my hand a copy of the ''Blue Chip Economic Indicators Top Analysts Forecast of U.S. Economic Outlook for the Year Ahead.''

This blue chip economic indicator document was actually issued just a few days ago on June 10. And for those who may not be familiar with this report, it is essentially a compilation of the beliefs based on what they see, of a variety of organizations and individuals from organizations which will be quite familiar if you hear who they are. There are actually 50-plus organizations that take part in this process, organizations like Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, Goldman Sachs, the National Association of Home Builders, Merrill-Lynch Economics, General Motors Corporation, Standard and Poor's. And those, of course, are just a few of the more than 50 organizations that take part in this economic forecast.

You might suspect that since I have got it here with me it is good news, and it is good news for the economy going forward. It projects that in the second quarter of this year, the quarter that will end just a few days from now on June 30, the economic growth rate, the GDP, will continue to grow at almost 3 percent; and in the third quarter of this year at 2.9 percent; in the fourth quarter of this year at 2.8 percent; jumping back up in two quarters of next year to 3.1 and 3 percent respectively.

And so these are good numbers; and so going forward, based on the economic basis that we have been able to set in our country, we expect things to continue to do quite well. The improvement in economic growth in recent years is reflected by some very good economic figures. For example, since August 2003, business payrolls have increased by over 5.3 million jobs. The unemployment rate stands at a low 4.6 percent. Consumer spending continues to grow, and the number of American families who own their own homes is at an all-time high.

The household net worth for families in the United States is also at a record high. Productivity growth continues at a healthy pace. Long-term inflation pressures appear to be contained at about 2.7 percent or so. Long-term interest rates, including mortgage rates are still relatively low. I can relate to this very well. I was in the real estate business for 20 years before I came here. I can remember in the 1960s selling houses with 6 percent, with mortgages that carried an interest rate of 6 percent. It was pretty much a standard rate.

Then as the years went by and inflationary pressures took hold, inflation drove interest rates to 6 percent, 6½ percent, 8 percent, 10 percent. Mr. Speaker, I can even remember interest rates on home mortgages being 19 percent, and of course that shut the market down.

Recently, interest rates for home mortgages have been at about 5 percent. But today, even today, when we think about interest rates being higher than they were a year or a year and a half ago, they are still at about the 1960s level of 6 percent or a little bit higher.

So low interest rates are still an incentive to economic growth. In addition, the resilience and flexibility of the economy have overcome a number of serious shocks: the war, the attacks on 9/11, and of course most recently the hurricanes of last year, all disruptive influences which have not been as disruptive as one may have thought.

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Equipment and software investment has been strong. It is clear that the Federal Reserve remains poised to keep inflation under control. All good news. The only soft spot that we see in the economy is in the housing sector. It seems to be slowing somewhat, although it appears that a soft landing is most likely. So in the recent policy report to Congress, like the Blue Chip Indicators, the Federal Reserve noted that the U.S. economy delivered a solid performance in 2005.

Furthermore, the Fed observed that the U.S. economy should continue to perform well in 2006 and 2007. In summary, overall economic conditions appear to remain positive. The U.S. economy has displayed remarkable flexibility and resilience in dealing with many shocks. The administration forecast for economic growth in 2006 is comparable with those of the blue chip consensus and the Federal Reserve. With growth expected to be about 3.5 percent in 2006, the current economic situation is solid and the outlook remains favorable.

Mr. Speaker, in December of 2005, this is another way to look at the economy, the Joint Economic Committee issued a report, under my direction, entitled ''U.S. Economy Outperformed the Canadian, European and Japanese Economies Since 2001.'' When we look at our U.S. economy and have comparisons within the economy, that is one way to look at economic growth. But another way is to compare it with what is going on in the rest of the world. The economic data showed that since 2001, the United States has outperformed every other large developed economy in the world. This report examines the performance of a peer group of large developed economies from 2001 to the present time. The peer group included Canada, Japan, the United States, and 25 member states of the European Union.

Recently, we updated this report to bring it current. The United States and Canada in the most recent version of this report tied for first place in economic growth among the major developed economies with an average gross domestic product growth of 2.6 percent a year from 2005 to the current period. That compares with just 1.6 percent economic growth in the European Union and 1.5 percent in Japan. The period includes the economic slowdown after the collapse of the stock market bubble in 2000 and the terrorist attack of 2001.

However, after Congress cut taxes on capital gains and dividends and provided business with incentives in May of 2003, the United States enjoyed the highest rate of economic growth among the major developed countries.

This is a point that I would just like to stop and pause for a moment to talk a little bit more about. We knew that economic growth while we were growing beginning in the fourth quarter of 2001, when we began to grow, job growth was very slow. The President said, and the Congress agreed, that if we gave business some incentives to invest, that investment in fact would take place and that we would grow. That actually happened.

As we see on this chart, we had this valley of very slow growth and very little invested in the economy during 2001 and 2002. But after the tax cuts that took place in the first quarter of 2003, business investment occurred rapidly and it helped to spur economic growth throughout the economy. For example, the United States created more jobs than any other major economy from 2001 to 2006: 6 million jobs as of today created in the United States, 5.7 million jobs in the European Union, 1.5 million jobs in Canada, and a loss of almost 1 million jobs in Japan.

The unemployment rate. In March of 2006, the United States had an unemployment rate of 4.6 percent. That is the second lowest among the major developed economies. Only Japan was better with 4.1. Canada was actually 6.4. Here is the unemployment rate in the United States; 4.6 percent in the yellow bar, actually 6.3 percent in Canada, and 8.4 percent unemployment rate in the European Union.

In industrial production, another example, from January 2001 to February 2005, the United States ranks first in the growth of industrial production among major developed economies. Industrial production grew by 7.4 percent in the United States, 4.1 percent in Canada, 2.8 percent in the European Union, and 1.4 percent in Japan.

The rate of inflation is more good news. It has remained contained throughout the countries that were studied. As I noted a little while ago in the United States, interest rates are comparatively low with other countries.

And so as we look at the economy generally, we believe that we have done some things right. I mentioned tax policy a minute ago. Let me mention one other item which I think is extremely important. While we give credit to our friends at the Federal Reserve, interest rates are a direct reflection, or follow along as a reflection, I guess is a better way of putting it, of the rate of inflation. And so we have to give credit to our friends at the Federal Reserve who have done a great job in controlling inflation.

Another prominent feature of the recent U.S. economy is in fact a lower and more stable rate of inflation than we have experienced in quite some time. The persistently low rate of inflation depicted on this chart there has helped to calm financial markets and reduce risk. This persistently lower rate of inflation has in turn fostered lower expectations of future inflation and consequently helped to lower the lid and keep interest rates low.

As we look here, we see that back in the eighties we had relatively high inflation, and as we went through the nineties, we can see that inflation actually dropped below 2 percent and has persistently stayed below 2 percent. The Fed has in essence adopted an implicit inflation targeting approach which has been very good for economic growth.

I would like to just conclude my portion of these remarks by saying that the blue chip indicators look good going forward and we have done some things right both here in the House and at the Federal Reserve. One of the things that I like to say about economic growth is that no matter what we do here, economic growth can't take place without the continued enthusiastic participation of the American worker. We try to provide those opportunities as best we can through our tax and spending policies, through the Federal Reserve's policy, through business incentives that we time and again put in place to encourage things to happen. But in the final analysis, it is the American working man and woman out there in the private sector that make economic growth possible.

I would like to yield at this point to my friend from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) who would like to add some thoughts perhaps to what I have said.

Mr. GINGREY. I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey yielding, and I thank him, Mr. Speaker, for bringing these statistics to the floor of the House this evening. Clearly, these numbers show that this economy is doing well under this Republican leadership and this Republican President. The blue chip report that the gentleman talked about on fiscal year 2007, and he mentioned those 50-something prestigious financial organizations, says that the economy will continue to do well the rest of this fiscal year and into 2007. Mr. Speaker, it is because of the policies of this administration and this Republican-led Congress. Those policies I am speaking of, of course, are that you grow the revenue when you cut taxes.

This is not a novel idea that we just invented over the last 2 or 3 years. This happened under a Democratic President in 1960, John F. Kennedy. It happened again in the early eighties under President Reagan. You cut taxes; you grow the revenue. All of these statistics that the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) has pointed out in regard to low inflation, low unemployment, robust gross domestic product over something like 12 straight quarters now. Five million jobs since 2001.

I know when I first got to the Congress in the 108th in 2003, all I heard, Mr. Speaker, from the other side was how many jobs had been lost since George W. Bush was first elected. They pounded on that. I have not heard too much from the other side recently, because clearly this economy is robust, these jobs are growing, and they will continue to grow.

We have this arcane scoring system, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, and I know everybody agrees, and this is really not in dispute, that when you cut taxes, they calculate a number of how much it is going to cost. I think with the Bush tax cuts, it was estimated that it was going to cost $1.3 trillion in reduced revenue; $1.3 trillion less coming into the Treasury because of a reduction of every marginal rate so that everybody in this country, every American taxpayer, would get a reduction in their Federal taxes and get a check in their pocket. To double the child tax credit, to eliminate the marriage penalty, to lower the capital gains and dividend rates to 15 percent for almost everybody and, indeed, for some as low as 5 percent, and to give our small business men and women, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the mom-and-pops of this great country who probably create 65, 70 percent of all these jobs that we are talking about, to let them more rapidly depreciate their capital improvements so they can, with bricks and mortar, new machines, new equipment, whether it is in my profession, the health care industry, or any other, to put people back to work, so that more people, albeit at a lower rate, are paying taxes.

What happens is instead of costing $1.3 trillion over 10 years, in about 2½ years our revenue increased, and I know the gentleman from New Jersey will confirm this and agree with me, by something like $250 billion, increased revenue, because of the boldness, the courage, and the good common sense to look at historical perspective and understand that when you cut taxes, you pull a country out of recession and you don't cause decreased revenue coming to the Treasury, you end up with more.

This is a great opportunity that the gentleman brings to us tonight to make sure the American people and all our colleagues on both sides of the aisle understand. Every Member is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for bringing us the true facts this afternoon and this evening on this floor of the House.

Mr. SAXTON. I thank the gentleman for emphasizing the importance of tax policy relative to economic growth.

One of the things that I would like to point out, and I know the gentleman knows this as well, the President today has been criticized by some for his tax policy, I think, unfairly. One of the charges that is often made is that these are, quote, tax cuts for the rich. I have some other statistics here that I would just like to share with my colleagues and that is simply this: if you believe that tax policy can be used to promote economic growth, as the gentleman and I do and as many others in this House do, then we are going to have to cut taxes relative to the people who pay taxes, because people who don't pay taxes can't get a tax cut because they don't pay taxes, unless we give them money back.

And so the facts are that the top 1 percent of the wage earners in this country pay 34 percent of the taxes. That is the individual income taxes. The top 5 percent of the people, wage earners, pay 54 percent of the taxes to the Federal Government. The top 10 percent pay 65 percent of the taxes. The top 25 percent pay 84 percent of the taxes. And the top 50 percent of the wage earners in this country pay 96.5 percent. So the bottom 50 percent of the wage earners in America, in the United States, pay about 3.5 percent of the taxes.

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So if we are going to have tax cuts and if the people who pay taxes are the ones whose taxes you cut, which you kind of have to do by definition, then it will fall that the top 50 percent of the wage earners get most of the tax breaks because they are paying 96.5 percent of all the taxes that are paid on the personal side in this country.

So because of what has gone on in Republican and Democrat administrations, and the gentleman mentioned John Kennedy's inaugural address in 1962. I can remember his words, almost, not quite, but he said something like this. He said, we cannot for long expect to remain the leaders of the world if we fail to set the economic pace at home; and he stood right up there on that lectern and outlined a set of tax cuts to make the economy grow. And John Kennedy's tax cuts went into effect, and the economy did grow.

So this is not new to many here, but it is a revelation sometimes to people who haven't heard this before.

So our economy is growing. It has been growing since 2001. Since 2003, when we put in place our tax cuts, we began to see investment take hold and the economy grow and jobs being created, almost 6 million new jobs created since this economic recovery began; a low rate of unemployment, 4.6 percent, and things looking pretty good for the future, according to the blue chip indicators, which we referred to earlier.

So, Mr. Speaker, I went on to share with my fellow Members these observations based on the facts that the gentleman from Georgia and I have cited here; and I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for coming here and taking part in this Special Order.

I think we can look forward, Mr. Speaker, to some good economic growth going forward, hopefully during 2006 as well as 2007 and beyond, as we continue to do what we can here to make that happen.

Again, I thank the gentleman for taking part.

AVIAN FLU PANDEMIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the amount of time that remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the Speaker, and the gentleman from New Jersey for allowing me a little time on the floor tonight.

I thought it was important to come to the floor and talk about an issue that pops up from time to time on our news shows and the American consciousness, and that is the issue of avian flu, or the bird flu.

Mr. Speaker, as far as a little background is concerned, there are several types of influenza. There is the common flu, or seasonal flu, that we all receive inoculation against every year. Because of modest genetic changes that occur in this virus year over year, it is necessary to get a vaccination every year. But sometimes, instead of just that genetic drift that happens within the virus, there is a major change, a genetic shift; and when that happens, the stage is set for a worldwide pandemic. And, indeed, history tells us that that will occur about three times every century.

Now, currently, the avian flu is present in birds; and a big genetic change would have to occur for this to become a major health threat to humans. As of June 16 of this year, the World Health Organization has confirmed 227 human cases, with 129 deaths reported. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, if you do the math, that is a mortality rate that is in excess of 50 percent.

Now, when you think of a worldwide pandemic, there are various trouble signs you encounter. The World Health Organization has identified five of those. Widespread distribution of the virus in nature, in this case in birds, an endemic carrying of the virus in birds. A wide geographic setting with involvement of other animals, in this case felines, cats and tigers have become infected, presumably from eating infected animals. Bird-to-human transmission occurs with inefficiency and then comes inefficient human-to-human transmission. The last step, efficient human-to-human transmission, has not yet occurred, but that is the step, the previous four have occurred, and that is the step that would signal the onset of a worldwide pandemic.

Because the threat is so significant, our Secretary of Health and Human Services, Michael Leavitt, has designated the threat anywhere in the world, a threat anywhere in the world is a threat everywhere in the world, and that is why it is incumbent upon us to keep such a close watch on this illness.

Steps one through four occurred between right now and 1997. The last step, which has not to date occurred, would trigger a human pandemic. One of our major problems with a worldwide pandemic is we, as humans, have no underlying immunity to this relatively new type of flu virus.

Now, as I mentioned earlier, there are approximately three pandemics every century; and, indeed, last century there were exactly three. In 1918, the Spanish flu killed 50 million people worldwide; in 1957, the Asiatic flu killed 170,000; in 1968, the Hong Kong flu killed 35,000 people in the United States.

If the pandemic flu were to hit, the Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 209,000 deaths in the United States for a moderate flu outbreak, such as occurred during the Asiatic flu outbreak of 1957, and 10 times that many, 1.9 million deaths in the United States for a severe epidemic, such as occurred when the Spanish flu broke out in 1918.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to this map that I have here. It is somewhat shocking to look at the eastern part of the world, several continents, in fact, that are totally covered in blue. And as you see from the key here, avian flu cases confirmed in 52 countries, and again widespread distribution across the eastern half of the globe.

The countries colored in in black are, in fact, where human cases have occurred; and we see originally China and Vietnam, Southeast Asia but more recently the addition of other countries that are moving more and more westward. There has been a gradual spread westward since 2004.

Mr. Speaker, let me demonstrate that further on this second map. Gradual western spread since 2004, and since 2004 the avian flu has gone from China to Cambodia to Thailand to Russia and then to Turkey in 2005.

Mr. Speaker, there was an explosion of outbreaks in early 2006 to the Middle East and Eastern Europe; countries such as Iraq, Romania, Italy, Germany, France, Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt, just to name a few. We see these concentric circles indicating the year of the spread. Here we have June, 2004, affecting primarily China and Southeast Asia; December of 2004, June of 2005, January of 2006; and as you can see, the arrow is pointing ever, ever westward.

From January to April, 2006, 35 new countries have reported avian flu outbreaks in poultry; and some of these have had their new first reported cases of H5–N1 virus in humans as well. So the total estimate of the World Health Organization for the number of countries affected is just over 50.

The disease is indeed endemic in birds. Over 200 million birds have been culled in the last 3 years, both birds that were suspected of having the infection and those culled for preventive measures. One of the keys here, Mr. Speaker, is this virus can be stopped in birds; and, indeed, stopping the virus in birds has to be the first line of defense.

The reason this is so important, and let me go to an additional map, if we look at the migratory flyways throughout the world, this disease is spread by migratory birds and infected poultry. Countries with outbreaks, this map shows the concentration of poultry worldwide and the migratory bird flyways.

The darker the color here, the greater the concentration of humans and poultry. You see the eastern United States, starting in my State of Texas, east Texas eastward, we have several significant concentrations of poultry juxtaposed to human populations.

Countries with outbreaks in general have a high concentration of poultry populations. There are some concerns over two flyways that go from Africa to North America, the so-called East Atlantic flyway, and the one that goes from Asia to Alaska, the East Asia-Australian flyway. Countries in both Africa and Asia have reported outbreaks and are countries that are directly on that flyway.

Now it is not for sure the virus will be carried this way, but the fact that the distribution has occurred in migratory birds, and those are the migratory pathways, certainly that is going to bear careful watching.

Some of the other unknowns is what is the behavior of the virus in very cold climates. I don't think anyone knows that yet, but, indeed, it is around this time of year that those bird populations are in fact returning to the Arctic areas. So increased testing across the United States, starting with Alaska, and indeed over nearly 100,000 samples have been taken from both live and dead wild birds as well as from high-risk waterfowl habitats.

On the World Health Organization scale of pandemic alerts, you go from low risk of human cases to efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission; and there are six stages on that World Health Organization pandemic alert chart. Currently, we are at a level three, no or very limited human-to-human transmission.

As of June 6, 2006, there have been 227 cases and 129 deaths. H5–N1, the virus that causes bird flu, has been cited first in 1997 in Hong Kong, with 18 human cases, six died, all poultry were culled. From 2002 to 2003, there was a reemergence of the virus in Asia. There was a high incidence of cases in a few countries. Vietnam accounts for 40 percent of the human cases; and Indonesia, so far, accounts for 20 percent of the human cases.

The problem is that, in Indonesia, avian flu has not yet been contained, compared to Vietnam. Indonesia has had outbreaks since early 2004, and new outbreak reports are coming out all